16 June 1965

WORKING AID FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT

: Current Situation and Options

in South Vietnam

This working aid presents, in tabular form, some of the vital elements of the situation in South Vietnam and postulates certain US options for dealing with that situation.

The vertical column lists the major participants in the situation; the horizontal bar lists elements of the situation or US options. At each intersection, therefore, will be found statements relating one of the participants to an element of the situation or stating that participant's estimated response to a US option.

Where published Special National Intelligence Estimates or ONE memoranda are applicable to a given option, these are cited in a source reference; otherwise the statements represent the judgment of the CIA Vietnam Working Group. Statements are numbered by combining the Roman numeral in the vertical column with the Arabic numeral on the horizontal bar; e.g. IB5 refers to the South Vietnamese reaction to the US option postulated in column 5 of the table.

A Top Secret table approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in November 1964 is attached as an annex; it postulates certain Communist military actions and suggests US/GVN responses as foreseen at that time. Use of the JCS table in this context has not been authorized by the Department of Defense.

PREPARED BY THE CIA VIETNAM WORKING GROUP

JCS review(s) completed.



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CURRENT SITUATION

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SOUTH VIETNAM

Approved For Release 2006/03/10: CIA-RDP68R00530A000100130014-8 25X1 . TOP SECRET Stated Conditions for Negotiations 3 1 Minimum Objectives & Interests 2 Current Tactics Limited bombing of north to hamper infiltra-tion, hearten SVN, and eventually hurt DRV enough to cause it to call off war. None, other than unwillingness to deal with Containment of Chicom expansionism in SEA. Establishment of a stable, independent, non-Communist government in Saigon. Liberation Front. T-A Improvement of balance of forces through intensified local recruitment and deployment of US and other forces. Cessation of hostile armed activity in SVN. SVN Compete with Viet Cong for popular support through wide variety of civic and military measures including pressure for better local and national government. Physical & economic security Survival as an independent entity Preservation of traditional social & 2. T-B cultural patterns Supply of men and arms to Viet Cong Threaten overt introduction of "volunteers" from the north. Generate international pressures on US to NVN Insists it has no "preconditions", only "working principles", which center around cessation of bombings against DRV, recognition of Front, US 1. Force US out of South Vietnam Set up coalition government under ${\tt Communist}$ influence. II-A withdrawal withdraw. VIET CONG Destruction of ARVN units and will to resist. Essentially the same as DRV, but often stated as "preconditions". 1. II-B Terrorism, agitation and subversion aimed at disrupting SVN political and social order. 2. No stated conditions of its own but Peiping has 1. Supply of military aid to DRV and VC. 1. Elimination of US influence from SVN strongly endorsed the position taken by DRV and NFLSV. \mathbb{I} Propaganda and diplomatic support for DRV and $\ensuremath{\text{VC}}$. Set up Communist-dominated, pro-Chinese gov-ernment in Saigon. 3. Take credit for any Communist victory in SVN to prove Chicom methods are better than Soviet in fighting US. Psychological warfare, including threats of intervention. COMMUNIST З. CHINA 4. Preservation of a Communist regime in NVN. None stated on its own. Has voiced support for DRV and NFLSV positions. Has stated belief that the first step toward negotiations must be cessation of bombings. Avoidance of general war.
 Take as much credit as possible from any Communist victory in South Vietnam and deny credit Supply of military equipment to DRV. N Political pressures on US to negotiate on DRV/VC terms. to Peiping.

3. Preservation of a Communist regime in NVN.

4. Limit spread of Chinese influence in SE Asia. USSR \mathbb{V}

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GENERAL

Approved For Release 2006/03/10 : CIA-RDP68R00530A000100130014-8 25X1 TOP SECRET US OPTIONS AND PROBABLE RESPONSES Current Prospects US Option #1 US Option #2 Bombing thus far had little impact either on ability or willingness of DRV to support war Continue according to present plans, using only those forces currently programmed and avoiding major escalation in NVN. Terminate commitments in SVN and withdraw under conditions which impair US standing elsewhere as in south. little as possible. Government forces hard pressed as Viet Cong 2. intensify offensive operations.
Political instability in Saigon weakening war effort and bringing pacification activities to virtual standstill. SVN GVN will probably be unable to cope with mounting VC military pressure and ARVN may be defeated or virtually destroyed on field of battle. Political and military collapse. NVN Presently favorable for the destruction of ARVN fighting ability and morale. Steady increase of support to VC, continued dis-interest in neogitations and hardening of DRV at-Triumphant propaganda boasting about success of Vietnamese people in throwing out foreign "aggressor". Early moves to establish at least de facto political control over all of Vietnam. VIET CONG Constant increase in military pressure on GVN and in political agitation and terrorism, especially in urban areas. Early moves to smash remaining vestiges of anti-Communist authority and to absorb South Vietnamese government under VC banner. The closer the ARVN comes to defeat, the better the Chinese Communist position. Vindication of theses on "US paper tiger" and national liberation strategy. Continued encouragement to Hanoi to perservere and not be seduced by negotiation offers. Employment of Communist victory in Vietnam to improve China's standing in world Communist movement to detriment of USSR. Additional promises of support to NVN, particularly if it appears that such support will not be needed. **COMMUNIST** Increase in pressure on Laos, Cambodia, and Northern Thailand. Will probably not even try to urge early negotiations on Hanoi. Will probably continue to provide support, at least in terms of material assistence to improve DRV's air defense capability, including radar and, perhaps, additional SAMs. Increased problems with Peiping in World Commu-Dim for arranging a negotiated settlement. Only fair for countering Chicom boasts that Vietnam war proves its thesis on revolution nist Movement. Re-examination of estimates of US staying power in face of "liberation wars" and, perhaps, in-creased support of "liberation movements" in Africa and Latin America. correct. USSR Placed in increasingly difficult position as war escalates.

> Initial relief at cessation of hostility and diminished risk of general war.
> Widespread belief that US had failed in test case of its ability to cope with insurgency.

Asian countries would review their relations with US and Peiping and would downgrade importance and value of US backing and support.

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GENERAL

Continued criticism of US involvement in Viet-nam and increasing disbelief in possibility of

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US/GVN success.

25X1 TOP SECRET US Option #5 US Option #3 8 US Option #4 Combine option #2 with unrestricted aerial warfare in NVN. Combining option #3 with unrestricted aerial warfare in NVN. Major augmentation and commitment of US Forces to offensive action (per Westmoreland suggestion) but avoiding major escalation in NVN. US Improvement of morale and capability for coping with VC pressure but ultimate test would still be that of combat and effectiveness of total program (See #3) Ambivalent reaction: encouragement but some tendency to "let us do it". Morale would be heartened by punishment of north, but situation on ground in SVN would be about as described in option #2. SVN Probably improvement in military situation, but actual result would depend on how US Forces used and key determinant would be effectiveness of total effort, political as well as military. Unless VC decisively checked on ground W SVN, RV would probably perservere. If VC so checked No lessening of determination to win but would recognize task had become harder. So long as Communist progress was being made on the ground in SVN, Hanoi would probably perservere NVN DRV would probably perservere. I would probably seek negotiations. Combat results would be real test.
DRV would step up its support, including additional NVN line units. If tide of battle ran
heavily against VC, might consider negotiations. Would perservere as in #3 above unless or until ordered to desist by Hanoi. VC would press on as described above in option #2. Reduced DRV resupply capabilies might eventually be felt but not for some time and issue VIET CONG might be decided by then. As #4, but would make obvious troop movements as if to intervene. So long as Communists think they are winning in SVN, Peiping unlikely to intervene with ground Would urge VC and DRV to continue struggle. Would promise more aid should US invade NVN. forces Might make some troop movements in Southern China to underscore commitment but would probably not intervene at this stage. Commitment of Chinese aircraft and pilots based in NVN, likely; Chicom air operations from bases in China less likely unless Chinese territory ac-COMMUNIST CHINA tually attacked.
Chicom attacks elsewhere in Asia (off shores, Taiwan, Korea) unlikely. Problems would grow more acute.
Would see no alternative to continued support for DRV. In time might have to face awkward choice of moving toward withdrawal or accepting risks of deepening Soviet commitment. So long as Communists think they are winning in SVN, USSR most unlikely to intervene with ground As in #4 Appearance "volunteers" possible. forces. New pressures and threats against US. Further military aid if feasible. USSR Criticism (including domestic) of US action As in #4 but more so. Those who doubt US ability to avoid defeat would think agony being prolonged and escalation would mount sharply as would pressure on -- and from -- allied governments. risks increased. Governments which support US would come under Condemnation from UN likely. GENERAL increasing criticism. 25X1 TOP SECRET Approved For Release 2006/03/10 : CIA-RDP68R00530A000100130014-8

Approved For Release 2006/89 POSEGREDP68R00530A000100130014-8 SENSITIVE

JCS Postulation of Possible Communist Actions and Possible US/GVN Countermoves

30 November 1964

Communist Action

1. Stepped up VC operations.

VC might attack US/GVN bases, terrorize US citizens, try to disrupt SVN govt and economy with increased terror, sabotage, attacks in Saigon, provincial capitals, and rural areas.

2. DRV or Chicom air attacks on SVN or US carriers.

The DRV Air Force (if not crippled by US strikes) can conduct fighter-bomber attacks against northern SVN and close-in carriers. From Hainan, Chicom fighter-bombers can reach northern half of SVN, and bombers can reach all of SVN and carriers in So. China Sea.

3. DRV ground attack against SVN or Laos.

The DRY, for reasons of rear area security and coast defense, has only 5 deployable divisions. It can, depending on weather, put and support 2 (in 48 hrs) to 5 divisions across the DMZ and/or up to 3 into Laos.

4. Chicom/DRV ground attack into SE Asia.

If not interdicted, the Chicom/DRV, depending on weather, can put and support 7-24 divisions into SEA. First Chicom forces could enter South Vietnam in 10 days.

Possible US/Allied Countermoves

- a. Take additional security measures, including dispersal outside SVN of some US air and adding US/GVN ground forces for base security and for protection of key cities or installations. b. Step up attack on infiltration targets. c. Evacuate unessential non-combatants. d. Carry out reprisals in dramatic cases.
- If Communist attack small, consider a limited
- a. If Communist attack small, consider a limited reprisal.
 b. If large and only DRV involved: (1) US/GVN airstrike DRV airfields, POL and support facilities to kill the DRV Air Force; (2) reinforce air defenses in SVN as insurance against Chicom air strikes; (3) alert US ground forces for deployment to SEA.
 c. If large and Chicoms involved: (1) US air intercept, engage in "hot pursue" Chicom aircraft; (2) US air strike air bases and related facilities in South China; (3) to forestall Chicom ground action, US air strike interdictiontype targets in South China; (4) consider hitting Chicom nuclear production facilities; (5) begin major deployments to SEA and West Pac to provide against the contingency of Chicom ground intervention.
- a. Defense: GVN ground defense, augmented quickly by US ground forces.
 b. Offense: (1) US/GVN interdiction, attrition and punitive air attacks on NVN; (2) US harbor mining and naval blockade; (3) early US/GVN ground offensive (consider seizing and occupying some or all of NVN).

 Monitor of the control of NVN in the control of NV
- c. Major deployments: Begin major US deployments to SEA and West Pac to provide against the contingency of Chicom intervention.

In addition to actions in para 3 above: d. Extend air strikes and blockade to So. China, increase US ground forces in SEA to 5-2/3 divisions, and employ US naval and air forces on a large scale against China.

e. Consider attacking Chicom nuclear production facilities.

f. Stress either a ground offensive to seize

Marth Victory (CONTAN 32-64) or eit seize

North Vietnam (per OPLAN 32-64) or air and naval action designed to drive Red China out of the war ApperventionRelease5006/08/69/EGIA-BPFERBOSSPARBEUSSER944-8

Comment

We cannot prevent stepped up VC operations, but, unless the SVN Government topples, the VC could harass but not stop US/GVN strike programs (which could be conducted entirely from outside

Air superiority over DRV should be achievable in 2 days, over South China in 5 days. If Chicoms openly intervene and US conducts strikes on the Chinese homeland, the risk of further escalation would be great.

SVN's army would be outnumbered 2 or more to 1. It can resist initially with 1 div, plus an airborne brigade as lift became available. The ARVN's counter-VC role would slow further reinforcement.

US air countermoves could be brought to bear on short notice. US ground forces, if not de-ployed in advance, would be arriving in the area slower than Chinese forces, unless the latter successfully interdicted.

SOURCE SHEET (Options)

OPTION #1

I-B-5 through V-5: Working Group judgment; this option

has not previously been considered

by CIA or the USIB.

OPTION #2

I-B-6: Working Group judgment; MACV

(Westmoreland cable) is even more

gloomy.

II-6 through V-6: Working Group judgment; in accord

with tenor of recent estimates though

latter have not been specifically

addressed to this option.

OPTION #3

I-B-7 through V-7: ONE 10 June 65 coordinated memoran-

dum "Reactions to a Further US

Buildup in South Vietnam".

OPTION #4

I-B-8: Working Group judgment; not specifi-

cally addressed in earlier estimates.

II-8 through IV-8: Covered by statement or implication

in 11 June 65 ONE Briefing Paper.

V-8: Working Group judgment; not really

covered in earlier estimates.

OPTION #5

I-B-9: Working Group judgment.

II-9 through V-9: Covered in part in ONE Briefing

Paper, 11 June 65.



THE SITUATION

	A MINIMUM OBJECTIVES & INTERESTS	B CURRENT TACTICS	C STATED CONDITIONS FOR NEGOTIATIONS	D CURRENT PROSPECTS
I a svn	1. Containment of ChiCom expansionism in SEA. 2. Establishment of a stable, independent, non-Communist government in Saigon. 3. Cessation of hostile armed activity in SVN. 1. Physical & economic security 2. Survival as an independent entity. 3. Preservation of traditional social & cultural patterns.	Limited bombing of north to hamper infiltration, hearten SVN, and eventually hurt DRV enough to cause it to call off war. Improvement of balance of forces through intensified local recruitment and deployment of US and other forces. Compete with Viet Cong for popular support through wide variety of civic and military measures including pressure for better local and national government.	None, other than unwillingness to deal with Liberation Front.	Bombing thus far has had little impact either on ability or willingness of DRV to support war in south. Government forces hard pressed as Viet Cong intensify offensive operations. Political instability in Saigon weakening war effort and bringing pacification activities to virtual standstill.
II a VIET CONG	Porce US out of South Vietnam. Set up coalition government under Communist influence. Same. HA	1. Supply of men and arms to Viet Cong. 2. Threaten overt introduction of "volunteers" from the morth. 3. Generate international pressures on US to withdraw. 1. Destruction of ARVN units and will to resist. 2. Terrorism, agitation and subversion aimed at disrupting SVN political and social order. BB	Insists it has no "preconditions", only "working principles", which center around cessation of bombings against DRV, recognition of Front, US withdrawal. Essentially the same as DRV, but often stated as "preconditions".	Presently favorable for the destruction of ARVN fighting ability and morale.
COMMUNIST CHINA	Elimination of US influence from SVN. Set up Communist-dominated, pro-Chinese government in Saigon. Take credit for any Communist victory in SVN to prove ChiCom methods are better than Soviet in fighting US.	Supply of military aid to DRV and VC. Propaganda and diplomatic support for DRV and VC. Psychological warfare, including threats of intervention.	No stated conditions of its own but Peiping has strongly endorsed the position taken by DRV and NFLSV.	The closer the ARYN comes to defeat, the better the Chinese Communist position.
III	ША	III B	шс	шъ
USSR	Avoidance of general war. Take as much credit as possible from any Communist victory in South Vietnam and deny credit to Peiping. Preservation of a Communist regime in NVN. Limit spread of Chinese influence in SE Asia.	Supply of military equipment to DRV. Political pressures on US to negotiate on DRV/VC terms.	None stated on its own. Has voiced support for DRV and NFLSV positions. Has stated belief that the first step toward negotiations must be cessation of bombings.	Dim for arranging a negotiated settlement. Only fair for countering ChiCom boasts that Vietnam war proves its thesis on revolution correct. Placed in increasingly difficult position as war escalates.
IV	TV A	IV B	IX C	IV D
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OPTIONS

	E US OPTION #1	F US OPTION #2	G US OPTION #3	H US OPTION #4	US OPTION #5	J US OPTION #6
US	Terminate commitments in SVN and withdraw under conditions which impair US standing elsewhere as little as possible.	Continue according to present plans, using only those forces currently programmed and avoiding major escalation in NVN.	Major augmentation and commitment of US forces to offensive action in SVN but avoiding major escalation in NVN.	Unrestricted aerial warfare in NVN, with no major augmentation of US effort in SVN.	Unrestricted serial warfare in NVN with major augmentation and commitment of US forces in SVN.	Invade North Vietnam in force in effort to bring about capitulation by Hanoi.
I a 5VN I b	Political and military collapse.	GVN will probably be unable to cope with mount- ing VC military pressure and ARTN may be defeated or virtually destroyed on field of battle.	Ambivalent reaction: encouragement but some tendemcy to "let US do it". Probably improvement in military situation, but actual result would depend on how US forces used and key determinant would be effectiveness of total effort, political as well as military.	Morale would be heartened by punishment of north, but situation on ground in SYN would be about as described in option #2.	Improvement of morale and capability for coping with VC pressure but ultimate test would still be that of combat and effectiveness of total program (See #3)	GVN, though enthusiastic, would be able to contribute only token forces. Some backlash resentment at colonialist implications of US effort.
II a VIET CONG	Early moves to Smash remaining vestiges of anti- Communist authority and to absorb South Viet- namese government under VC banner.	Steady increase of support to VC, continued disinterest in negotiations and hardening of IEV attitude. Constant increase in military pressure on GTW and in political sgitation and terrorism, especially in urban areas.	No lessening of determination to win but would recognize task had become have recognize task had become have recognize task had become have recognize task had become had to support, are invasion and the recognization of	So long as Community progress was being made on the ground in SYN, Hanci would probably persevere. W. would press on as described above in option SY. Reduced My resupply capabilities might eventually be felt but not for some time and issue might be decided by the system.	In tes NV decisively backeds on ground in SVM, MV seed scoonbly preserves of TV to checked would probably seek negotiations. Fould persevere as in #3 above unless or until ordered to desist by Macol.	1. Here resistance, in both conventional and reportial and seeds by all officers of the first or eventions of the first or even into Chisa, and appeal for committee or even into Chisa, and appeal for committee or evention to their both of the first of
COMMUNIST	Visidication of themes on "US paper tiger" and national liberation strategy. Reploitation of Communist victory in Yietman to improve China's atmidding in world communist move- ment to detriment of 100RM. Increase in pressure on Loos, Cambodia, and Northern Thailand.	Continued encouragement to Hanot to persevere and not be account by separation offers. Additional prosines of support to NTW, particularly if it appears that such support will not be needed.	Nould urge VC and REV to continue struggle. Mould promise more aid should US invade NTM. Wight make some troop movements in Southern Chims to underscore commitment but would probably not intervene at this stage.	So long as Communists think they are vinning in STM, Peiping unlikely to intervene with ground forces. Commitment of Chinese sireraft and pilots based commitment of Chinese sireraft and pilots based in China less likely unlike the chinese territory actually attacked, unless chinese territory raivan, koreal unlikely. We will be communicate the communication of the china pilots attacks elsewhere in Asia (off shores, Taiwan, koreal unlikely, we	As in \$4, but would make obvious troop sovements as if to intervene.	1. Would interpose measurely, with or without invitation, if they considered NNY resistance crumbling or thought UN/OWN forces likely to approach border-copy into Laso and might threaten Tauland. Theretoe Tauland. Will DNY would generate intensive propaganda/diplomatic pressure to "stop DB aggression".
USSR IV	Increased problems with Pelping in world Communist novement. Re-examination of estimates of US staying power in face of "liberation ware" and, perhaps, increased support of "liberation movements" in Africa and Latin America.	Will probably not even try to urge early megotiations on Hanni: Mill probably continue state and the state of the state of the state saterial assistance, to improve DWV's air defense capability, including radar and, perhaps, additional SAMs.	Problems would grow more acute. Sould see no altorastive to continued support for RW. In time sught have to face swhered choice of noving toward withdrawal or accepting risks of deepening Soviet commitment.	So long as Communist think they are winning in SYN, USSR not unlikely to intervene with ground forces. New pressures and threats against US. Further military aid, possibly including pilots and technicians, if feasible,	As in #4. Further silitary aid, possibly including pilots and technicians, if feasible.	1. Noted mount intensive diplomatic effort in UN and elsewhere to preserve community regime in Hanci. 1. Hanci. 1. Hanci. 1. Hanci. 1. Hanci. 1. Hanci. 1. Hanci. 2. Hanci. 3. Desergeory military sid, short of intervention with ground units, to NVN and perhaps China.
GENERAL V	Initial relief at cessation of hostility and diminished risk of general war. Widespread belief that US had failed in test case of fits shill; to copy with insurgency. Asian countries would review their relations with US and Points on the Company of the Compan	Continued criticise of US involvement in Victuas and increasing disbelief in possibility of US/CVB success.	Those who doubt US ability to avoid defeat would interested being prolonged and escalation risks increased. Design prolonged and escalation risks increased. Overgrants which support US would come under increasing criticism.	Criticism (including domentic) of US action of the criticism of the critic	As in #4 but more so.	Criticism of US further intems/fied, including almost cortain DN condemsation, including almost cortain DN condemsation, from or formally censure US action, strong possibility of dispatch by Afro- Strong possibility of dispatch by Afro- Nordbuide demonstrations against US installations and personnel.

EVENTUALITIES

	EVENTUALITY #1 Moderate (limited) US/GVN military success in checking Viet Cong	EVENTUALITY #2 Imminent Viet Cong Collapse	EVENTUALITY #3 Imminent NVN Collapse	EVENTUALITY #4 Massive ChiCom Intervention
US	Would provide opportunity for intensive civic action/political consolidation effort to extend GVN authority and win popular support.	Heightened requirement for major emphasis on political and economic development programs.	Assumes successful US invasion of NVN.	
I a	Would improve morale, possibly generating	Government in power would gain popular prestige from success, though Saigon politicking may increase.		
	additional support for GVN and perhaps inspire greater efforts in political/civic action programs.	Government's ability to translate initial success into permanent popular, especially rural, support essential to prevent renewed insurgency.		
Ib	1 K	it.	IM	IN
NVN	1. Attempt to counter US/GVN success by intro- ducing substantial numbers of NVN troops, covertly at first, overtly if necessary.	Substantial introduction of NVN troops having failed, would probably seek ceasefire, attempting to preserve clandestine organi-	Refusal to surrender, fierce delaying action awaiting Chinese rescue.	Would provide whatever support possible.
II a	Would probably intensify subversion and terrorism to offset military defeats.	zation and intending to resume at more favorable time.		
VIET CONG	3. Lowered VC morale and rise in defections.	TATOLIUM VIIIC.	If not already subdued or at least under control, would make all-out effort to harass rear areas and lines of communication.	
IIb	пк	UL	пм	ΠN
COMMUNIST CHINA	Try to keep NVN and VC in the war with increased political and material support. More threats to send volunteers, but actual dispatch unlikely.	Back up DRV/VC efforts to preserve Viet Cong assets in place through negotiated ceasefire by escalated threats of "volunteer" intervention plus show of strength in South China. Make greater effort to preserve DRV as sanctuary by warnings of Chinese intention to defend DRV.	Massive Chinese intervention, with or without NVN invitation.	1. Chinese intention would be to drive US forces out of SEA, including Thailand. 2. Within one week at least 6 of 21 infantry divisions in NVN border regions could be moving into NVN. Without interdiction, probably 600,000 troops could be deployed in NVN within 60 days. 3. Although defenses opposite Taiwan would be strengthened, a second front against Taiwan,
III	ан к	. III L	III M	Korea or India would be avoided.
USSR	Probe for signs that either side wants to negotiate. Barder general public line toward US. Increased military aid to NYN, but no troops.	Will use imminent VC collapse to press thesis that Chinese Communist policies lead to disaster. Might urge negotiated settlement on DRV.	Continue with substantial military aid to China and NVN, but no direct intervention. Would probably not precipitate crisis elsewhere in the world.	Considerable emergency effort to sustain ChiCom war fighting capabilities. No direct engagement with US forces so long as Soviets saw no direct threat to USSI or to existence of Communist regime in China. Loud sabre-rattling and pressures on both sides for ceasefire.
IV		IV I.		IVN
	1. Some relief at apparently improved prospects. 2. More pressure on US for negotiations.	Salutory second thoughts in Afro-Asian world about US ability to counter subversion, insurgency and Chinese expansionism.	10.3	UN as organization might disintegrate.
GENERAL				
v	ΥΚ	VL .	VM	V N